

IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please CANCEL claims 10, 11, 16-28, 30-36 and 38, and AMEND claims 1, 6 and 9 in accordance with the following:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of controlling levels for restricting a reproduction of a video by a video reproducing system so as to restrict viewing of a part or all of the video depending on a user's age, the method comprising:

setting passwords corresponding to the levels so as to control viewing of the video;
checking an input password against the passwords prior to reproducing the video;
determining a viewing level including searching the levels corresponding to the input password; and

reproducing the video according to the viewing level; and
setting initial conditions for controlling the levels including:

designating a default viewing level to be used as the viewing level in response to one of an elapse of a predetermined wait period, entry of an incorrect input password and non-entry of the input password; and

selecting the predetermined wait period used by the video reproduction system to convert the viewing level to the default viewing level in response to one of a termination of the reproduction of the video and turning the video reproduction system off.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein
the video reproduction system is a digital video disc (DVD) system, and
the levels for restricting the reproduction of the video are parental levels in the DVD system.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the determining of the viewing level further comprises determining the viewing level as a lowest age level in response to the input password not matching the passwords corresponding to the levels.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the determining of the viewing level further comprises determining the viewing level as an upper level in response to the input password matching more than one of the passwords corresponding to the levels, wherein the upper level is a highest age level among all age levels of the levels corresponding to the input password.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the viewing level determined is reset to a default viewing level in response to turning the video reproduction system off, wherein the default viewing level is one of a lowest age level set by an authorized user and a default age level set by a manufacturer of the video reproducing system.

6. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for controlling levels for restricting a reproduction of a video by a video reproducing system so as to restrict viewing of a part or all of the video depending on a user's age, comprising:

a memory which stores passwords corresponding to the levels; and

a controller which outputs a window to check an input password against the passwords in the memory prior to a reproduction mode, reads information including the levels corresponding to the input password to determine a viewing level from the memory, and controls the reproduction of the video according to the viewing level,

wherein

the viewing level determined is reset to a default viewing level in response to turning the video reproduction system off, and

the default viewing level is one of a lowest age level set by an authorized user and a default age level set by a manufacturer of the video reproducing system.

7. (Original) The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the video reproduction system is a digital video disc (DVD) system, and the levels for restricting the reproduction of the video are parental levels in the DVD system.

8. (Original) The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the controller determines the viewing level as a lowest age level in response to the input password not matching the passwords.

9. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the controller determines the viewing level as an upper level in response to the input password matching more than one of the passwords corresponding to the levels, wherein the upper level is a highest age level among all age levels of the levels corresponding to the input password. ~~levels for restricting viewing of the video depending on a user's age to be the level of the highest age in a case where the same passwords are set at two or more levels for restricting viewing of the video depending on a user's age.~~

10-11. (Cancelled)

12. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the setting of the passwords comprises, one or a combination of, designating each of the passwords to a corresponding one of the levels and designating one of the passwords to a plurality of the levels.

13. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the reproducing of the video comprises:
reading reproduction data from the video having a level which is the same or lower than the viewing level determined; and
reproducing the reproduction data having the same or lower level than the viewing level.

14. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the determining of the viewing level further comprises determining the viewing level as a default viewing level in response to one of non-entry of the input password, elapse of a predetermined wait period and non-matching of the input password to the one or more passwords corresponding to the levels.

15. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the viewing level determined is reset to a default viewing level in response to one of turning the video reproducing system off and terminating the reproduction of the video.

16-28. (Cancelled)

29. (Original) An apparatus for controlling levels for restricting a reproduction of a video by a video reproducing system so as to restrict viewing of a part or all of the video, comprising:
a memory which stores data including one or more passwords corresponding to the levels so as to control viewing of the video; and

a controller which determines a viewing level prior to reproduction of the video, controls the reproduction of the video according to the viewing level and resets the viewing level to a default viewing level in response to one of turning the video reproducing system off, the passage of a predetermined wait period and terminating the reproduction of the video, wherein the controller verifies an input password against the one or more passwords stored in the memory and determines the viewing level as a level highest among all of the levels corresponding to the input password in response to the input password being consistent with the one or more passwords, and otherwise the controller automatically determines the viewing level as the default viewing level.

30-36. (Cancelled)

37. (Original) A computer readable medium encoded with processing instructions for implementing a method of controlling levels for restricting a reproduction of a video so as to restrict viewing of a part or all of the video in a video reproduction system performed by a computer, the method comprising:

receiving one or more passwords corresponding to the levels so as to control viewing of the video;

determining a viewing level prior to reproducing the video including verifying an input password against the one or more passwords set in the video reproducing system, wherein the viewing level is a level highest among all of the levels corresponding to the input password in response to the input password being consistent with the one or more passwords, and otherwise automatically determining the viewing as a default viewing level; and

reproducing the video according to the viewing level, wherein the viewing level corresponding to the input password is reset to the default viewing level in response to one of turning the video reproducing system off, the passage of a predetermined wait period and terminating the reproduction of the video.

38. (Cancelled)